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Message Text

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67
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4063
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
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AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY RABAT
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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PGOV, PFOR, IS, SP
SUBJECT: ISRAELI REACTION TO WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS MEETING IN MADRID

REF: MADRID 9242

1. WHEN THE MEETING BECAME KNOWN THERE WAS GENERAL SATISFACTION IN ISRAEL THAT IT WOULD BE THE FIRST ORGANIZED MEETING OF JEWRY IN SPAIN SINCE THE INQUISITION. HOWEVER, GOI OFFICIALS AND ISRAELI MEDIA HAVE BEEN CRITICAL OF BOTH THE SPANISH GOVERNMENT AND WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS LEADERS BECAUSE OF ALLEGED SLIGHTS TO JEWISH LEADERS AND SUBMISSION TO ARAB PRESSURE. THIS DIS-SATISFACTION IS BASED ON REPORTS THAT A MEETING, WHICH HAD BEEN PLANNED FOR LORD FISHER AND NAHUM GOLDMAN
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WITH THE KING , HAD BEEN CANCELLED AND THAT UNDER

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SECRETARY OF JUSTICE MENDJABEL, WHO WAS SCHEDULED TO GIVE
THE OPENING ADDRESS, CANCELLED HIS PARTICIPATION. BOTH
GOI AND MEDIA COMMENTATORS SEE ARAB PRESSURE ON THE
GOVERNMENT OF SPAIN BEHIND THESE DEVELOPMENTS.

2. THE JERUSAELM POST SAID DECEMBER 6 THAT INSTEAD OF
BEING AN ACT OF HISTORIC RECONCILIATION THE CONVENTION
IN MADRID TURNED INTO A DEMONSTRATION OF SPANISH SURRENDER
TO ARAB DICTATES. MAARIV WROTE ON DECEMBER 7 THAT "IT
IS NOT EASY TO DETERMINE WHICH FAWNING WAS MORE SICKENING-
THAT OF THE SPANISH GOVERNMENT BEFORE THE ARABS, OR THAT
OF THE JEWS BEFORE THE SPANISH GOVERNMENT." EDITORIALISTS
WERE EQUALLY CRITICAL OF GOLDMAN AND THE WJC. HAARETZ
SAID, "THERE IS NOT A SINGLE REASON TO JUSTIFY THE DECISION
TO HOLD THE CONVENTION OF THE WORLD JEWISH CONGRESS IN
MADRID." HATZOFE WROTE ON DECEMBER 7 THAT "THE CONVENTION
WAS HELD IN SPAIN WITHOUT CONSULTING WITH ISRAEL
ON WHETHER IT WOULD BE DESIRABLE FROM A POLITICAL VIEW-
POINT. DR. GOLDMAN THEREFORE ERRED WHEN HE DECIDED TO
HOLD THE CONVENTION IN MADRID, WITHOUT BEING AWARE OF
THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN SPAIN."

3. FOREIGN MINISTER ALLON WAS HARSH IN HIS CRITICISM
OF BOTH SPAIN AND THE WJC IN A DISCUSSION OF THIS SUBJECT
IN THE KNESSET DECEMBER 8. ACCORDING TO RADIO REPORTS
HE CHARACTERIZED THE MEETING AS " A MISERABLE CONGRESS IN
THE WRONG PLACE AND AT THE WRONG TIME." HE SAID THE WJC
HAD NOT CONSULTED WITH THE GOI BUT IF IT HAD HE WOULD
HAVE TOLD THEM NOT TO HOLD THE CONVENTION IN MADRID AT
THIS TIME. THE SPANISH GOVERNMENT SHOULD NOT BE ABSOLVED
FOR ITS PART IN THE FAILURE OF THE CONVENTION, ALLON
CONTINUED; ITS CONDUCT WAS DISHONORABLE AND IT GAVE WAY
TO BLACKMAIL, SHOWING THERE ARE ELEMENTS IN THE NEW
SPANISH REGIME WHICH HAVE A LONG WAY TO GO BEFORE THE
COUNTRY CAN BE NUMBERED AMONG THE ENLIGHTENED DECOCRACIES.
ALLON SAID THE RESULTS ARE LIKELY TO INFLUENCE THE ESTABLISHMENT
OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS BETWEEN ISRAEL AND
SPAIN.

4. COMMENT: ALLON GETS SURPRISINGLY EMOTIONAL AT TIMES,
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BUT IT HAS BEEN EVIDENT FOR SOME TIME THAT THE GOI IS
DISAPPOINTED WITH SPANISH HESITATION TO MOVE CLOSER
TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS. THERE
IS A SUSPICION THAT THE GOS SAYS ONE THING TO THE
ISRAELIS, ANOTHER TO THE ARABS. NEVERTHELESS,WE FEEL
THAT IF THE SPANISH WERE WILLING TO TANGO, THEY WOULD
FIND A WILLING ISRAELI PARTNER.
DUNNIGAN

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